30/28-14 (4)

Memorandum Submitted to the Government of Madras

Through,

The Honourable Chief Minister

RAJAGOPALACHARI

Sri. C. RAJAGOPAL-ACHARI

By the Ex-Servicemen Colonists ~~of the Wynaad Land Colonization Scheme~~, Sultan's Battery.

Honourable Chief Minister,

It is with deep affection and great pleasure, that we welcome the honourable Chief Minister on this occasion after assuming the reins of Popular Government in the State of Madras. We believe, we shall be justified in enumerating in this Memorandum the various immediate needs and requirements of the exservicemen colonists of the Wynad Land Coloinzation Scheme, which has been started in 1948 with a particular view to safe-guard and foster the interests of Ex-Servicemen who have rendered a Meritorious Service to their motherland during the *past second Great World War*. Fully aware of the handicaps and financial limitations of the government we have reduced our request to the bare minimum involving immediate reddressal of our present grievences. And Hence we presume that this memorandum of ours, probably the last one of our's, submitted this day to the honourable minister with full trust, hope and confidence, leaving aside all the other ones, submitted previously to Honourable Ministers and high ranking resettlement officers of the state as well as the Central Government will not be a cry in the wilderness as was the fate of several others.

The Wynaad Colonization Scheme is perhaps the biggest of similar schems launched in India, both in it's Extent and in out lay. This particular scheme bears the full responsibility of taking into account the absolute Welfare of Two Thousand Ex-service men and their poor families, who are at present sailing in a boat of great despair due to the lack of material financial aids from the Government.

"Self help is the best help". We do agree the fact. But it is our duty to bring to your Kind Notice that we are only in our infant stage with the colonial life.

It is worthwhile, considering at this stage, when the fate of more than 2000 families has been staked here, whether the scheme is a failure or success, and on what lines it can be made more efficient, useful and economic or by what ways and means it can be made to yield better results.

The Scheme first made out by the then British administration was to allot to each colonist five acres of wet plus 10 acres of dry or 15 acres of dry land with a well built house, well, latrine etc , etc., with a cash grant of Rs. 5000/- to effect various kinds of agricultural improvements.

In this connection, we invite the honourable Minister's kind attention towards the opinions given in *the Madras Information* special planning number *by Sri, J. M. Lobo Prabhu. I. C. S. Secretary, Development Department*, printed by the Superintendent Government press, and Edited and published by the Director of Information and publicity, Government of Madras in *October 1951*.

In that, it has been particularly stressed that the ~~Ex-Servicemen~~ *Colonist have been given loans to the extent of Rs. 1900/- each. An Equal amount has been donated by the P. W. S. R. fund to each Ex-Servicemen Colonists settled.*

But thanks to the AD hoc Committee, this has been reduced to 5 acres of dry and two acres of wet with a mere cash grant of Rs. 1900/- only, payable within 5 year's time picemeal sums. This particular grant was estimated as a time when the cost of living was only about a third of the present rate. Hence, these who are unable to raise private capital fail to reach the goal and fall down half-way.

So the present free grant of Rs. 1900 from the P. W. S. R. Fund is quite in-adequate to develop a plot either 10 acres dry or 5 acres dry and two acres of wet. The Very Same fact has been brought to the notice of the government several times by the present administrative Staff, for which no actions so far.(——)

For further evidence to these facts, we are forced to divert your kind attention towards the Expenditure account of the *Agricultural research Farm* at Ambalavayal, for its practical research made upon the very same object and the very same account has been still kept as(a hidden)top-most secret by the farm officials.

The administration and Supervision by the Revenue officials were said to be only for the initial stage. The scheme is now completely left to the whims and fancies of the administrative staff.

The Colonist's Association, a registered society has no voice in the shaping or working of the scheme.

The present arrangement of Sanctioning and payments of grants, is highly deffective and causes unnecessary troubles and delay to the colonists, which is the main cause of nearly 50% (fifty per cent) of the present failure of the scheme and thereby it is suggested and kindly requested, that the same may be done through a Multipurpose Co-operative Society of our own, which will greatly help to mitigate the unnecessary expenditure of pay and allowances of the Officers and Staff in the colony.

In General. The land of Wynaad, with regard to its structure, climate, nature and fertility of the soil (General Topography) is only suitable for permanent crops like coffee, pepper and oranges and a poor colonist, after plantation of these kinds of crops will wait for another 10 years' time to anticipate any sort of yielding. A colonist by no means will be benifited by the income desired from the interim transitary crops like, ginger, tapioca etc. etc.

The following are a few suggestions towards the betterment of the scheme and of the welfare of the settlers.

1. The immediate granting of a cash-loan equivalent in value to the present free grant amount of Rs. 1900/- recoverable after a period of ten years by which time the permanent crops are likely to yield.

2. The formation of a Multipurpose Land Co-operative Society is an immediate and defenite necessity and the distribution of the above-demanded cash loan may be effected through this society only.

3. (*a*) *Useful and intime Medical aids* by the opening of one more hospital with sufficient beds, and the location of the same being carefuly aimed at the central point of the colonization area, the existing one at present being quiet out of reach.

(*b*) An Ambulance Van of the military pattern should be provided for carrying the sick personnel to the hospital.

4. The construction of all small bridges within the limits of the colonization Area, the absence of which cause great inconveniences to traffic fecilities.

5. The installation of small factories and workshops in the colony, being most of the ex-servicemen settlers are good technical hands.

6. *The exemption of all ex-servicemen colonists* from house-tax and land revenue for a period of at least 5 years, by which time the permanent crops are likely to yield.

7. The necessary timber for the purpose of house construction of colonists may kindly be granted free of cost.

8 Over and above these facts, it is earnestly requested that the Government should give particular care to the education of the children of colonists. In this connection we beg to point out to your kind notice the existance of only one secondary school at Battery and the present working of that itself is not steady and thorough due to the shortage of funds. It is an institution raised from public donations and the Government have not yet paid any sort of attentions to stimulate the interests of personnel who are now holding the reins of management of the same.

The registered society managing it, is asked to furnish a security of Rs. 15,000 for its recognition. They have, we understand applied to the Governor for furnishing the security from the P. W. S. R. fund as the school is mainly intended for the eduction of the children of colonists and in reality, most of the teachers encaged at present are Ex-Servicemen Colonists.. So it is our humble submission that the Government may be pleased to waive this condition as a special case and thus encourage the management for steady progress and working of the institution. If the Government were to introduce a reform in the colony by the opening of an institution like this, please imagine the expenditure of the same. Therefore it is kindly requested to render all possible helps to the particular charitable institution that exists in the heart of the Colony Area.

9. The question of giving patta rights to colonists for the land they are holding is a very important problem, which will enable the Colonists to effect permanent interest follows on the land, permanent interest only follows permanent Title to the land. For Development of land, for security of tenure, the land alloted to a colonist must be assured by assigning it under *permanent patta*. There is no real benifit in making the land inalienable. So it is earnestly requested that all the ex-Servicemen settlers of this colony may be granted the patta rights at a very near future.

10. Of late, Government have ordered stopping of grants to certain categories of Ex-Service personnel including VCO's (J. C. O's) The plea seems to be that these ranks of personal while on service have not contributed anything to the P. W. S. R. fund. But at the time of selection, no distinction was made as and all those who were found fit for selection, selected and were granted lands and funds on an equal footing. Therefore we submit, that the state Government or the Central Government should have considered this aspect before settlement, and that it is too late now to enforce such an order.

Further, although these persons were discharged while in these ranks, the fact remains that, most of them were promoted from N. C. O. Ranks and as such, had contributed to the P. W. S. R. Fund, and that therefore entitled for the same fund.

11. Deserters folder:- Re - allotment & hardships to get monetary helps.

Important. We came to understand from reliable sources that the Government have passed very recently a loan known as *Takkavi Loan.* This kind of loan with severe rules and conditions for its recovery within a very short period is of no benifit to the Ex-service settlers of this colony. More over it is suggested, that the granting and distribution of this, loan by the present administration may end in the very same fate like the free grant, which has been already expended in waste due to the deffective nature of the system they practiced for that. So it is earnestly and humbly requested that any further granting of loan must be effected only through a co-operative society of our own which may ease the unnecessary delay and irregularity in payments.

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Unless living conditions are provided to the Ex-Servicemen settlers of this colony through the various suggestions made above, the scheme is bound to fail sooner or later and the Government must accept the full responsibility for increasing the number of deserters from the colony.

In conclusion, we trust and hope that the Honourable Minister's high intelecutal powers will be utilized for the solving of this problem, and thus save us from the very deplorable conditions.

Thanking you again on this occasion and awaiting early redressal of our grievences.

Submitted with due respect and humble submission.

President
M. A. Dharma Raja Iyer, B. A.
For Wynaad Ex-Servicemen Colonists, Association

S. BATTERY,
15—1—1953.

~~P. JOHN SAMUEL.~~
~~GENERAL SECRETARY.~~
President

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Copy submitted to:— all M-Pos & MLAs of Malabar in the convention

2 (I) The scheme has not been given due publicity. There is no definiteness of its rules and regulations governing the scheme. A Bulletin or White paper ought be published detailing the scope, working and Rules of the Colony Scheme.